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[1779. Jan'y 16.]

"We the subscribers, members of the American Philosophical Society, request the Vice Presidents to postpone the meeting advertized of the said Society to some future day, for weighty reasons.

PHILADELPHIA January 16th, 1779."

JOS. REED,

Matth. Clarkson, JOHN EWING.

David Rittenhouse,

Gerard Clarkson,

Fras. Hopkinson,

Lewis Nicola,

Jno. B. Smith,

Moses Bartram,

Chas. Thomson

Owen Biddle,

Thos. Bradford,

Sharp Delany.

After a blank page follows, on a sheet of paper pasted in:

"The Calamities of War and the Invasion of this City by the Enemy having interrupted the Proceedings of *The American Philosophical Society for promoting useful Knowledge*, —the members are requested to meet at

on the of at o'clock in the evening; to take into Consideration the present State of the Society, with such Matters as may be necessary to promote the Design of their Institution.

"We the subscribers do desire that the above Advertise-ment be printed in the News Papers of this City.

"PHILADELPHIA, February 1779

Owen Biddle,
David Rittenhouse,
Jno. B. Smith,
Lewis Nicola,
Gerard Clarkson,
Sharp Delany,

Samuel Fooks,
John Ewing,
William White,
John Ewing,
Thos. Hopkinson,
John Morris, Jr.,

Jos. Reed,
Th. Bond,
W^m. Smith.

Benj ⁿ Rush,	Tho. Smith,
Samuel Duffield,	Cha. Thomson,
Sam. G. Cadwelader [<i>sic</i>],	Tho. Mifflin,
John Benezet,	Thos. Bradford,
Matth. Clarkson,	Jon ⁿ Potts,
	Fra. Alison.

1779. *March 5.* (9 present.)

"The following members . . . met at the College . . . agreeable to a notification in the public papers . . ." Bond (Chairman), Smith, White, Nicola, Duffield, O. Biddle, Du Simitiere, Bradford and Clarkson ("Sec'y for the evening").

"It was unanimously agreed that, that the Meetings & Business of the Society be revived."

"Agreed, n. c. d. that an election of Officers be held on Friday the 19th Inst. at the College, between 2 & 5 P. M."

"That no person be permitted to vote, before he has paid the arrears due to the Society for the three last years, and that Dr. Duffield receive the same."

"Colonel Nicola and M^r. Du Simitiere are desired to call upon Samuel Taylor, bookbinder, and receive from him such volumes of the Transactions as he has in his Possession, and deposit them with the other effects of the Society."

1779. *March 19.*

Election of Officers for the remainder of the year.

President—Benjamin Franklin, Esq., LL.D., &c., &c.

V. Presidents—Dr. Thomas Bond,
David Rittenhouse, Esq.,
Dr. William Shippen. }

Secretaries—Rev^d Dr. W^m. Smith,
Rev^d Dr. John Ewing,
Rev^d M^r. W^m. White [*sic*],
Owen Biddle, Esq^r. }

Curators—Col. Lewis Nicola,
Dr. Samuel Duffield,
Mr. Pierre Du Simitiere. }
Treasurer—Matthew Clarkson, Esq^r.

“Agreed, That the Vice Presidents wait on his Excellency the President of this State, and request of him in behalf of the Society to favor their meetings with his presence, as often as he conveniently can, as their Patron.”

“Agreed, That the Rev^d Doctor Ewing be requested to prepare & deliver an anniversary oration for this year”

1779. *April 2.* (7 present; both Bonds.)

The answer of the President of the State to the Vice-Presidents was received and ordered to be published “together with a copy of their address to him in behalf of the Society.

“Agreed, That the Treasurer collect 30 shillings from every member when he first comes to take his seat and give a voice in the business of the Society, and that in the notice of the next meeting it be particularly desired that all the members who can conveniently be present will be punctual in their attendance, as it is proposed to chuse [*sic*] several new members.

“Samuel Adams Esq^r, one of the Delegates in Congress, having informed the Society that there is a book for them in the hands of a gentleman in Boston, the Secretaries are directed to write a Letter to him to put it into the hands of Doctor Thomas Bond Junr. who engages to send for the book.”

1779. *April 16.*

“His Excellency, Joseph Reed Esq^r Patron of the Society;” Bond, Rittenhouse, Smith, White, O. Biddle, Ewing, Du Simitiere, Duffield, Clarkson, Alison, Charles Thomson [*sic**], Nicola, Morris, Jones, Hopkinson, Rush, Fooks,

* Autograph Thomson, see above.

B. Bond, Jun^r. Isaac Bartram, Moses Bartram, and Bradford.

Dr^r. Ewing sensible of the honor would "prepare an oration as soon as his convenience will allow."

Secretaries requested to get, through "some of the Delegates from the State of Virginia," the four Vols. Trans. sent by the R. Acad. at Turin to the American Philosophical Society, per Mr. Mozzei [*sic*], "now at Richmond in Virginia."

Election of three new Members, "whose names had been postponed at two previous meetings:"—The Honorable Mons^r. Gerard, Minister Plen. of his most Christian Majesty; Doct^r. James Hutcheson [*sic*]; Rev^d George Duffield.

"The Patrons and vice presidents are desired to notify to his Excellency Monsieur Gerard his Election into this Society, and to request that he will be pleased to countenance and assist them in carrying on the laudable purposes of their Institution."

"The Secretaries are desired to prepare a proper Certificate to be delivered to his Excellency, agreeable to the rules of the Society."*

1779. May 7. ("Society Hall ;" 15 present.)

Lukens, Rittenhouse, Biddle, appointed a Committee "to have the *observatory* repaired and the *Instruments* lodged in the same."

This committee was also "requested to wait on the Honble the Speaker of the House of Assembly to represent to him that they are willing to comply with his note respecting the *Telescope*, but are of opinion that it is not proper to lend it to Individuals, as it would be injurious to the Instrument, and interfere with those views of the Society for which they obtained the use of it from a former Assembly."

* "Of a meeting held April 24, 1779, there are no minutes. But in a list of members it appears that on that day was Elected His Excellency the Sieur Conrad Alexander Gerard, Secretary of the Council of State of his Most Christian Majesty and his Minister Plenipotentiary to the United States of North America, &c. &c." [This on a fly pasted in opposite May 7, 1779.]

“A Calculation of an Eclipse of the Sun, June 24th. 1778, with a translation of Baron Wolfius’s principles of Spherical Trigonometry by Mr. Daniel Frihauf, of Northampton,” was presented.

“An order was drawn on the Treasurer to pay Mr. Aitkin twenty dollars for binding a Volume of the transactions of the Society to be presented to his Excellency Mr. Gerard.”

Another order for sixteen dollars in favor of Mr. Hilary Baker who wrote His Excellency’s Certificate of election.

Secretaries directed to report “the state of papers formerly selected for publications,” and others since presented; and to proceed in their business of preparing letters in answer to foreign correspondents.

1779. *May 21.* “*Society Hall.*” (“His Excellency Joseph Reed, Esq., Patron,” and 14 other members.)

Reed reported the presentation to Gerard, who “desired the Committee to assure the Society of his sense of the honor . . . & of his intention to forward the views of the Society . . . in America & in France.”

Dr. Bond read an essay “On the means of preserving health and preventing diseases.”

Col. Nicola read an essay “To account for the Deluge, from the Suspension of the diurnal rotation of the earth.”

“Both gentlemen very obligingly complied with the Society’s request to leave their pieces among the papers.”

Unreporting committees continued.

1779. *July 23.* (5 present.)

“Mr. Churchman gave in a memorial relative to a map of the peninsula between Delaware & Chesapeake bays including thirteen counties,” asking its examination and recommendation to the public.—Rittenhouse, Lukens, Ewing, O. Biddle, and Dr. Smith, examining committee.

“An astronomical paper,” from Meyer, Astronomer to the Elector Palatine, was referred to Rittenhouse.

An order to pay Hilary Baker \$30, signed by the V. P.

1779. *Aug.* 20. (16 present; Dr. Bond presiding as usual; Gerard present.)

Jno. Churchman was “called in” to hear the report on his map: “As the Society have appointed us a committee . . . we are of opinion that he is possessed of sufficient materials, both astronomical observations and actual surveys, to enable him to construct an accurate map, and have no doubt but that he has executed his design with exactness & care, but we can not help expressing our desires of seeing the map laid down upon a much larger scale, which would render it more serviceable for promoting the Knowledge of Geography.”

Rittenhouse read his reply to Mr. Christian Meyers [*sic*]. Gerard was requested & agreed to forward it on his return to France with a Vol. of Trans. A. P. S.

A letter to Buffon, “acknowledging the favor of his publications,” was ordered, to be delivered likewise by Gerard.

Rittenhouse read his “Solution by Experiment of certain optical Illusions.” “Left among the papers of the Society.”

1779. *Dec.* 10. (7 present.)

The letter to Buffon was read by Dr. Smith :

“PHILADA. Sep. 15, 1779.

“ILLUSTRIOUS SIR

“The return of his Excellency the *Sieur Gerard* to Paris, furnishes the American Philosophical Society, with a favorable opportunity of acknowledging a debt which they have long owed to you ; That duty, by order of the Society, hath devolved upon me, and would have been discharged more seasonably, if the calamities of war, whereof America is now the scene, had not interrupted the ordinary channels of communication.

“The Society want Language to express their grateful sense of the

Honor you have done them by the superb present of the two first volumes of your work entitled "*Histoire Naturelle des Oiseaux*," containing colored plates of the Birds, and their natural histories, elegantly bound; to which by your Generosity has since been added two volumes more of plates only; This work will do honor to your name, and to the Republic of Letters, as long as the study of Nature's works or the adoration of Nature's God, shall continue to be cultivated among mankind.

"The Society have to lament, that since the receipt of your books, our Situation hath been such, that the chief attention of those among our members, who might have contributed something towards the important work, in which you are engaged, hath been necessarily called towards the Assistance of their country in the great Struggle which she now sustains. But it is hoped the time is fast approaching (and that your valuable life may be prolonged to that time) when the re-establishment of general peace, shall leave the friends and Devotees of Science, on both sides of the Atlantic, at full liberty to unite their efforts for the advancement of wisdom, virtue and humanity, unconfined to Sect or nation.

"If it should appear, that the services of the Society in America can be rendered of any use toward the completion of your design, either respecting the animal or fossil [*sic*] kingdoms, the *Sieur Gerard*, who has done us the Honor of permitting his name to be enrolled among our members, or our learned and truly respectable president, Doctor Franklin, while he continues at Paris, will furnish you with opportunities of conveying to us your commands. Herewith you will receive another copy of the first volume of our Transactions, lest the former copy may not have come to hand. We are about preparing a second volume for the press, which shall be transmitted to you when published. I have the Honor to be with the most perfect respect,

"Illustrious Sir,

"Your most obed't & most hble Serv't

"WILLIAM SMITH,

"*Secret'y Amer'n Philos'l Society.*

"Mons^r Buffon."

"An essay on Inoculation," by Dr. Bond, read, and a copy for publication requested.

1779. Dec. 17. (10 present.)

Letters from Rev^d W^m. Maddison [*sic*], President of William and Mary's College, in Virginia, containing "a series of *Meteorological Observations* by his Excellency Governor Jefferson and himself separately, for an year and a half; like-

wise a set of Experiments on what are called the "sweet springs."—Thanks, and a request for continuance of correspondence.

Dr. Bond proposed: "That each member before taking his seat . . . or voting . . . shall pay £15."

A plan for incorporating the Society to be prepared by Smith, Duffield and Biddle.

[No minutes exist (either rough or written out) of any subsequent meeting until]

1780. *Feb'y* 17. (Rittenhouse and 9 others present.)

When "the Society finding it necessary to have a regular place of meeting, it was moved and seconded that a Committee be appointed to enquire where a proper lot could be obtained for building a Hall for the Society, or whether any house or lot already appropriated for public purposes, similar to those of this Society could be obtained; Dr. Bond, Mr. Wilson & Dr. Smith were appointed a committee to make the necessary enquiries on this subject & to report as soon as they can."

Dr. Ewing having objected his occupations, Timothy Matlack was appointed to make the annual oration in which thanks should be paid to the Legislature if the pending bill for incorporating the Society were granted.

1780. *Feb'y* 25. (Rittenhouse and 9 others present.)

The Bill of incorporation was read; and a blank left for *real* estate, was on motion filled with these words: "ten thousand bushels of wheat per annum or value thereof."

A Committee was also appointed to deal with members of the Assembly to endeavor to have leave out certain words from a proviso added by the Assembly, requiring sundry